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Questionnaire development & testing in the 21st century:

What are the challenges?

9th April 2013



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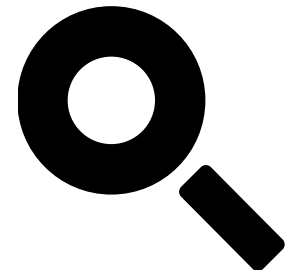
The QDET 'challenges'

1.

Almost 10 years ago

“...pretesting’s universally acknowledged importance has been honored more in the breach than in practice, and not a great deal is known about many aspects of pretesting, including the extent to which pretests serve their purpose and lead to improved questionnaires.”

Presser et al (2004) Methods for Testing & Evaluating Survey Questionnaires. Willey



The QDET 'challenge'

whether problems identified in pretests predict measurement error in surveys; which pretesting methods are best and in what circumstances

the cost-effectiveness of different pretesting methods in terms of reducing survey costs

using question-testing findings to develop theory to improve the 'repair' of questions

the development of a repository of findings from pretests to facilitate the growth of knowledge

**What's been
achieved**



2.

QT predicting measurement error

Statistical

modelling: e.g. MTMM, IRT

Experimental

Designs, typically involving split ballot experiments

To date limited experimental evidence

- Forsyth, Rothgeb, Willis (2004)
- McGee (2007); Fowler (2007; 2009; 2011); Consenza (2007; 2009); Haraldsen (2009);

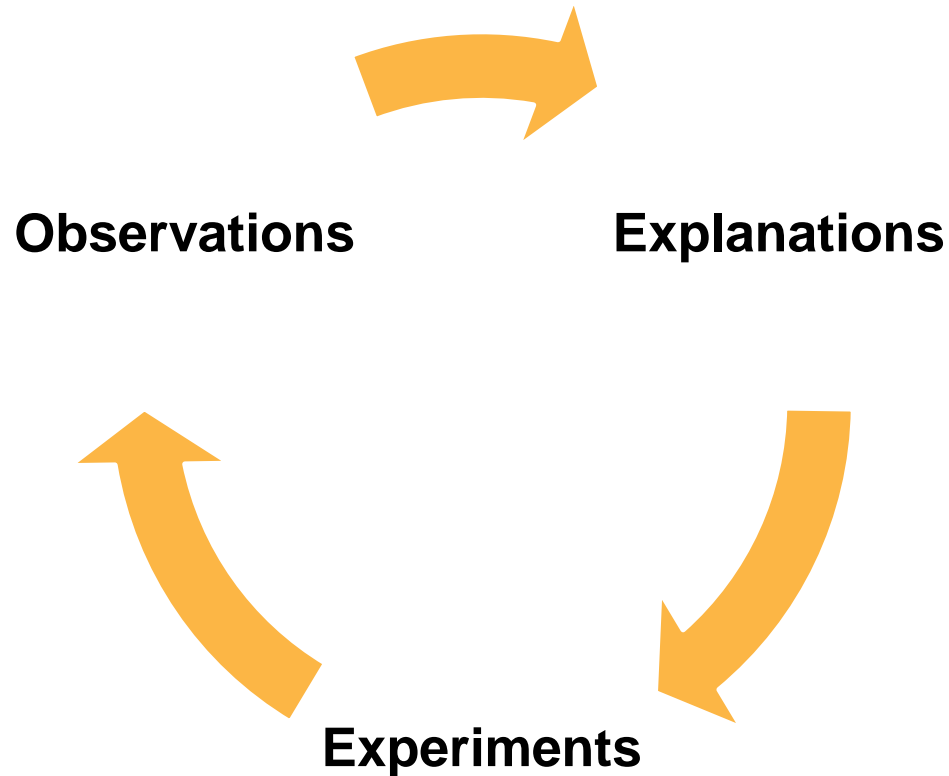
Cost effectiveness

ABS Pretesting in Survey
Development (2001)

Cross Cultural Survey Guidelines XI
Pretesting (2011)

But cost effectiveness not quantified

Developing theory



Repository of findings

QBank

UK Data Archive

Individual org's archives

Challenges for the next decade



3.

Some challenges

- Does pretesting 'improve' survey questions?
 - How do we measure improvement?
- Which pretesting methods are most cost effective in improving survey quality?
 - How do we measure cost effectiveness?
- How do we do more with less?
- What place is there for pretesting in a world without surveys?

Shaping the agenda



4.

What to do?

Designing experiments

To demonstrate impact and cost-effectiveness of pretesting

Defining improvement

Meta analyses

Of existing pretest data to inform theory & learn more about effective use of pretesting methods

Should QUEST be more proactive in shaping the research agenda?

What resources are needed to support this?

Thank you

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would like to contact the author,

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